

RAYMOND C. CABALLERO
MAYOR



CITY COUNCIL

JAN SUMRALL
DISTRICT NO. 1

ROSE RODRIGUEZ
DISTRICT NO. 2

LARRY M. MEDINA
DISTRICT NO. 3

JOHN COOK
DISTRICT NO. 4

DANIEL S. POWER
DISTRICT NO. 5

PAUL J. ESCOBAR
DISTRICT NO. 6

LUIS G. SARIÑANA
DISTRICT NO. 7

ANTHONY COBOS
DISTRICT NO. 8

SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MEETING CONFERENCE ROOM, 10TH FLOOR NOVEMBER 12, 2001

The City Council met in special session at the above place and date at approximately 9:00 a.m., Mayor Raymond C. Caballero present and presiding and the following Council Members answered roll call: Jan Sumrall, Rose Rodriguez, Larry M. Medina, John F. Cook, Daniel S. Power, Luis G. Sariñana. Absent: Paul J. Escobar and Anthony Cobos.

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The agenda was as follows:

Discussion and action with representatives of the Ciudad Juarez, Chihuahua, Municipal Government on border issues of mutual concern to El Paso and Ciudad Juarez.

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Mayor Raymond C. Caballero made opening comments. He said the following, "this is the first time these two cities have met, and we appreciate you coming across taking your time to discuss issues we have here. Our Mayor Pro-Tem, Larry Medina, and District Representatives Jan Sumrall, Rose Rodriguez, John Cook, Dan Power and Luis Sariñana are here today to participate in this meeting. Before we get into the agenda, I want to have Mayor Jose Reyes Ferriz make a comment."

Mayor José Reyes Ferriz of Cd. Juarez commented as follows: "Thank you, I am very pleased to have been invited by the City Council of the City of El Paso. For us, it is very important to have collaboration between the two cities. We have been trying to strengthen our relationships and we want to have a stronger relationship with the United States. For Cities like El Paso and Ciudad Juarez, it is a priority to face the challenges that these times represent. It is something we have to do to get hand in hand and receive an invitation to have a historic meeting. It is very important and I really appreciate the invitation extended by the Mayor Raymond C. Caballero of El Paso and initiative to have this important meeting. Most of my Council members are represented here" and he proceeded to introduce them as follows:

Mayor Pro Tem Alvaro Navarro
Representative Arnoldo Cabada De La O - Social Development Commission
Representative C. Rebeca Soledad Baca Alvidrez - Education and Culture Commission
Representative Hilda Margarita Castillo Carrera - Sports and Public Health Commission
Representative Sara Tinajero Chavez - Tourism and Economic Development Commission
Representative Nancy Moriel Bueno - Community Development Commission
Representative Rodolfo Bermejo Rodriguez - Public Works Commission
Representative Clemente Delgadillo Ortiz - Building Services and Monument Commission

Representative Miguel Agustín Corral - Tax Commission
Representative Jose Luis Barrios Garcia - Urban Development Commission
Representative Norma Gutierrez Del Villar - Housing Planning Commission

Mayor Caballero stated that both cities should arrive at a mutually beneficial outcome in regards to the use of mass transit, which in turn reduces pollution, it's more comfortable for children and the elderly, and it will provide reasonable and safe transportation for tourists.

Representative Barrios Garcia commented that they are temporarily in service due to an annulled election. He proceeded to explain that he would like to discuss and explore the following three issues:

1. Customs and INS - he stated that he understands the position that the United States is in because of the terrorist attacks but that he also sympathizes with his constituents' situation when having to come over to El Paso and having to wait at the border crossing between two and three hours.
2. American Consulate service - he commented that he has used the services in the past and the paperwork process is very slow and strict with the regulations. He proceeded to explain that the process for a Visitor's passport (VISA Lazer) is very slow and that any deviation is an automatic cancellation of the whole process.
3. Rio Bravo - he explained that he is concerned with the security and cleanliness of the Rio Bravo. He commented that he believes it is the responsibility of both cities and that coming to an agreement would be beneficial to both communities.

Mayor Caballero thanked Representative Barrios Garcia for his comments. In regards to the American Consulate, the Mayor commented that he will relate his concerns to the Director for the American Consulate and hopes to have an answer soon. He stated that the customer is always right and that this is a services game. In regards to the Rio Bravo, Mayor Caballero commented that we should have some sort of a monument in what appears to be a national park and develop the area with a mutual benefit. He added that some of that land is in New Mexico, and we have no say in that portion and that another part of the land belongs to Asarco.

Representative Sariñana stated that we need to continue working together and just be patient on the border crossing issue for the sake of everybody's safety based on the terrorist attacks that the nation is facing. He proceeded to explain that months ago he turned in a petition with over 800 signatures where the residents around Yarbrough and Border Highway were complaining about a horrible and intolerable smell and about mosquitoes. He added that we were very fortunate that those mosquitoes did not make it into El Paso but he does not know where we stand with the petition. He requested that something be done in regards to this health issue that needs to be corrected.

Representative Medina welcomed our brothers and sisters from across the river and stated that this is the first time that a joint meeting has ever been held. He suggested that the negative and positive issues be addressed and that we have these joint meetings on a regular basis. He suggested coming up with a date and a plan of action so that the meetings are not useless and only become social gatherings. He questioned whether or not an Ordinance could be established in order to have regular joint meetings.

Mayor Caballero expressed his agreement with Representative Medina's idea and suggested that we institutionalize this process and have two meetings a year, one in El Paso and one in Cd. Juarez. He commented that Representative Sariñana's points bring a vast amount of issues that need to be dealt with and both cities need to work together on this and more issues.

Representative Baca Alvidrez agreed with the issues already mentioned and expressed her great concern on the horrible smell from the water plant that has not been addressed. She proceeded to explain that even

though it is a State issue, they should be able to come up with an answer, through the joint meetings, with a solution to a problem that is bothering our neighbors.

Cd. Juarez Mayor Pro-Tem Alvaro Navarro commented that as neighbors, we should worry about everything and work together to come up with solutions even if it is a State or local issue because in the end it affects our community.

Representative Power stated that we are one community where we drink the same water, breathe the same air, etc. He commented that we need to work on building this community and creating more jobs. He hopes that we build a tourism liaison between both cities because of Cd. Juarez' rich culture. He stated that we must see ourselves as one regional community.

Mayor Caballero stated that they are exploring the possibility of opening a tourism office in El Paso, and Cd. Juarez could be a part of it.

Representative Power stated that sometimes issues affecting Cd. Juarez and vice-versa come up during the year and meetings should be called aside from the semi-annual meetings. He asked that we have feasibility and flexibility to call meetings when emergency issues come up, and meet as needed.

Mayor Caballero expressed his concern and mentioned a situation where it took us three-fourths of a day on an emergency issue that was to occur in the next half hour.

Representative Sariñana mentioned that he recalls an Interlocal Agreement resolution among the three sister cities signed with Mayor Ramirez and Mayor Galindo allowing the city to participate in anything that would impact the City of El Paso and act in case of an emergency.

Mr. Charlie McNabb, Chief Administrative Officer, responded that he did not recall any agreement of that sort.

Representative Rodriguez stated that she recalls that there was a tri-state environmental agreement signed a couple of years ago and believes that it is the resolution that Representative Sariñana is talking about.

Representative Tinajero Chavez explained Cd. Juarez is considered the third highest polluted city and that the border crossing wait is a major contributor to it. She proceeded to explain that economic development in the fields of tourism and commerce and not only industrialization are very important. Business tourism in Cd. Juarez is a major contributor to our economic development. We need to implement action plans on environmental and economic development issues.

Representative Barrios Garcia mentioned that it was just a matter of sitting down and discussing areas of interest to both cities. He proceeded to suggest that we work on an agenda with specific issues, implement and act on the issues, and then come back to a joint meeting and evaluate the results.

Representative Sumrall stated that the issue of the maquiladoras moving out of town needs to be addressed since they contribute to our tax base.

Representative Miguel Corral thanked everyone for the opportunity and said that even though El Paso is very far away from Washington and Cd. Juarez is very far away from Mexico City, we should become allies. He expressed his concern on Education and commended El Paso for their great educational program. He suggested that he would like to see that children from El Paso go to Cd. Juarez and vice-versa and plant a small tree as a symbol of world peace. He stated that traditions have to start somewhere and he would like this to become a tradition for everyone to follow.

Representative Delgadillo agreed that the idea of having joint meetings with a plan of action and not only as social gathering is a great idea. He explained that they are temporarily serving the government based on an annulled election. He concluded by explaining that their districts are formed based on specific issues vs. geographical areas and that their meetings are held twice a month.

Mayor Reyes Ferriz explained that his Council cannot make a resolution at the moment, but that they would present a similar proposal addressing the priority issues at their next meeting so that the first (international) meeting can be tentatively held in the month of February in Cd. Juarez.

Motion made Representative Medina, seconded by Representative Sariñana and unanimously carried that El Paso City Council agree to meet with the Ciudad Juarez City Council for a joint City Council Meeting twice a year, one meeting in El Paso and one meeting in Cd. Juarez and no more than six months apart. The next meeting is to be held in Ciudad Juarez in the year 2002 to discuss and take action on the following:

1. Commerce and Tourism
2. Health and Safety
3. History and Culture
4. Environment and Water
5. Education
6. Miscellaneous and Other Issues

Mayor Caballero proceeded to present a proclamation to Mayor Reyes Ferriz of Cd. Juarez and a gave him a key to the City of El Paso as a token.


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Motion made by Representative Rodriguez, seconded by Representative Power and unanimously carried to adjourn this meeting at 10:30 a.m.

APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Carole Hunter

Carole Hunter, City Clerk



Rita Rodriguez, First Assistant City Attorney